

# MEMORANDA

CONCERNING THE COLLECTION OF  
INFORMATION AND MATERIAL

AMONG

PRIMITIVE PEOPLES



WELLCOME

HISTORICAL MEDICAL MUSEUM


LONDON

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/(91)



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WELLCOME  
HISTORICAL MEDICAL MUSEUM

MEMORANDA

Concerning the Collection of  
Information and Material among  
Primitive Peoples

Wellcome Library  
for the History  
and Understanding  
of Medicine

**WELLCOME  
COLLECTION**

/ (91)

## FOREWORD

THE following particulars are desired when collecting information and material. Answers to queries should be recorded on blank page facing the text. If the space is inadequate, continue the remarks on blank pages at the end, indicating the query replied to by section number and letter. When recording details, give the precise locality where the information, object, substance or specimen was obtained; also the name of the tribe concerned. This should be recorded on one of the special LABELS and tied securely on the object. The label should bear a number corresponding to the note in this book, the name, use and object of the article, and where and from what tribe it was collected. The notes should also state the district inhabited by each tribe, the name of chief and origin of tribe, the general character of the country, and, if possible, the reasons for the employment of each particular object. In all notes the dates, distances, dimensions, weights, heights, etc., should be given when such details affect the understanding of the subject.

A fine pen or sharp-pointed pencil should be used when making notes.

## SECTION NO. 1

### Deities—

A.—What are the native ideas, if any, respecting a Supreme God or Great Spirit, or other Omnipotent Ruler of the Universe?

B.—Have they any belief in deities or spirits? If so—

C.—Do the natives worship a Supreme Being through images or other media.

D.—Have they good and evil deities?

E.—Have they any forms of worship?

F.—Do they believe human beings have a soul?

G.—If so, how do they describe it?

H.—What do they think becomes of it hereafter?



## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 1—(continued)

### Deities—(continued)

J.—Record the native conception of the *Creation of the World and Man*; also of animals, plant life and minerals, land and sea and the denizens thereof.

K.—Have they any ideas and legends regarding Adam and Eve; Garden of Eden; Cain and Abel; the Flood and Noah's Ark, etc.?

L.—What do they know or believe as to the origin and habitat of the ancestry of their race or of other races?

M.—Obtain particulars of any sacrificial rites, their origin and significance.

N.—Have they any idol or deity specially associated with healing whom they propitiate, appeal or make offerings to, in cases of sickness and disease?

### *What to Collect*

NOTE.—Obtain specimens of all idols, deities, sacred wands, fetishes, etc., associated with the art of healing and otherwise.

## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 2

### **Native medicine-men or witch- doctors—**

A.—Is medicine practised by men or women, or both?

B.—Describe dress, equipment, instruments and appliances of native medicine-men or witch-doctors.

C.—Record particulars of their method of practice, and treatment of the sick.

D.—How is the medicine-man paid?

E.—What are the conditions of payment?

F.—How does the medicine-man store and carry his medicines and instruments?

**NOTE.**—Get details of the costumes of the medicine-men. Make sketches or take photographs if possible, and secure complete equipments and outfits, masks, ornaments, medicine rattles, fetish figures, charms, instruments, appliances, etc.

Note details of any practices or habits peculiar to the medicine-man, practical, magical and ceremonial, etc. Procure any containers, bottles, bags or boxes in which medicines, amulets, etc., are usually carried, also spoons, cups and other implements used for the administration of medicine.

## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 3

### Disease—

- A.—What are the ideas of the natives as to the origin and cause of disease generally?
- B.—What are their ideas of each particular disease prevalent amongst them?
- C.—Give the names of such diseases.
- D.—Are there any believed to be hereditary?
- E.—State if origin or date of introduction of those which are infectious or contagious is known or lost in antiquity.
- F.—Have such diseases only been known in recent times?
- G.—What traditions, if any, are there respecting their introduction? And the approximate dates.
- H.—What is the native theory of the causes of infection or contagion?
- I.—What precautions are taken to prevent the spreading of infectious or contagious diseases?

**NOTE.**—Obtain particulars about the prevalence of such diseases as smallpox, mumps, sleeping sickness, measles, whooping-cough, influenza, malaria, cancer, gonorrhœa, syphilis, epilepsy and tubercular disease: especially as to extent and virulence.

## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 4

### **Surgery—**

A.—Are surgical operations performed, and in what cases?

B.—What instruments or appliances are used?

C.—Are any methods of producing anæsthesia known or employed, such as compression of the arteries or administration of drugs, etc.? If so, record full details.

D.—Is trepanning known or practised? If so, get full particulars of method and instruments used.

E.—Is cauterising practised? If so, record the method, and get specimens of instruments and appliances.

F.—What method of treatment is employed for fractures?

G.—Is the amputation of limbs practised?

H.—What methods are used in the treatment of wounds?

**NOTE.—Obtain specimens of all kinds of instruments or appliances used, including those for cutting, bleeding or cupping, extracting teeth, or for gynæcological purposes, etc. Collect specimens of crutches and artificial limbs; splints for setting broken limbs; also dressings or any substances used in the treatment of wounds.**



## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 5

### **Medical treatment and remedies for various diseases—**

- A.—State the chief method of medical treatment employed for different diseases.
- B.—Is any method of inoculation known?
- C.—Is bleeding, scarifying or cupping practised?
- D.—If so, for what diseases, and by what methods?
- E.—What remedies are used in the treatment of diseases?
- F.—Enumerate diseases, and remedies for the same that are mostly used and found successful.
- G.—What methods are employed in the preparation and administration of these remedies?
- H.—Record the dosage and conditions under which they are severally administered.

## NOTES

SECTION NO. 5—(continued)

**Medical treatment and remedies, etc.—(continued)**

J.—What purgative and emetic drugs are used by the natives?

K.—Record the names of those which are most relied upon.

L.—Are clysters or enemas known or used?

M.—Get full particulars of methods employed, and state what medicaments are used.

N.—Are spectacles or eye-shades used to protect the eyes in strong sunlight and to improve power of sight?

**NOTE.**—Obtain instruments or appliances for bleeding, cupping or scarifying, and for administering enemas or native enemas.

Obtain specimens of native drugs—vegetable or mineral—used, and record source and place of origin. If of vegetable origin, the flowers or flowering tops, fruits, seeds and leaves, which would facilitate identification of the plant, should be obtained. Stems bearing ripe seeds should be taken, if possible, from the same plant. If animal or mineral, secure specimens in the original state and in the form in which the substances are employed. In

## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 5—(continued)

### Medical treatment and remedies, etc.—(continued)

the case of compounds, obtain all details of composition and method of preparing, also the alleged reasons for such methods.

All vegetable drugs collected for chemical examination should be thoroughly dried but not exposed to the sun. If necessary they may be dried by moderate artificial heat and then placed in tin-lined or other damp-proof and insect-proof containers.

Herbarium specimens should be brushed with a solution of corrosive sublimate, four grains to the ounce of methylated spirit; and fleshy fruits are best pickled in formalin (7% to 8% formaldehyde) or methylated spirit.

For chemical investigation, two or three pounds of each specimen should be sent.

## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 6

### **Poisons—**

A.—What poisons are known, and what forms are used for arrows, spears and for ordeals?

B.—Obtain full information as to the origin and source of any poisons—animal, mineral or vegetable—employed. Also their methods of use.

C.—What poisons are used by the natives for criminal purposes?

D.—What methods of administration are employed?

**NOTE.—** Obtain specimens of poisonous substances. Ascertain methods of preparation. If vegetable, obtain specimens of the plant, flowering tops, roots, seeds, leaves, etc. Obtain two or three pounds of same if important.



## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 7

### **Superstitions, magical rites and ceremonies —**

- A.—Obtain details of rites and ceremonies, if any, carried out to ward off disease demons, or in the cure of maladies.
- B.—Particulars of any peculiar and curious superstitions.
- C.—What kind of charms and amulets are used by the natives, especially those employed as a protection from disease?
- D.—Is the smoking of opium, tobacco, hemp or any other substance practised as a habit or as a curative agent?
- E.—If so, what are their effects on natives?
- F.—State methods of employment.
- G.—Is the serpent, crocodile or any animal or reptile, object or planet associated in any way with the healing art?

## NOTES

SECTION NO. 7—(*continued*)

**Superstitions, etc.**—(*continued*)

H.—If so, is it used with or on any of their fetishes, wands, or ceremonial sticks in connection with the healing art?

J.—Ascertain the reason why, and the origin of its use.

K.—Ascertain if the eating of the internal organs or other parts of animals or reptiles is practised.

**NOTE.**—Obtain specimens of all amulets, charms, fetishes, etc., associated with the healing art and used or carried as a protection from disease and evil spirits; also masks representative of the demons of disease. Procure any talismans carried to give courage to the wearer; also Phallic emblems on fetishes, or other objects fashioned in the shape of the genital organs.

## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 8

### **Family life, marriage customs and ceremonies—**

- A.—Particulars of marriage customs, if by capture, exchange or purchase.
- B.—Particulars of native codes of morality, if any.
- C.—Methods of guarding the chastity of virgins and matrons.
- D.—If adultery is penalised, and how.
- E.—Pre- and post- marriage customs and ceremonies, if any.
- F.—Describe and obtain any appliances connected with same.
- G.—Are any marks, gifts or symbols in form of rings exchanged between man and woman on marriage?
- H.—If so, describe same, and obtain specimens.

## NOTES

SECTION NO. 8—(*continued*)

**Family life, etc.**—(*continued*)

J.—Ascertain habits and customs of natives respecting periods of life, age of puberty, customs, rites and ceremonies regarding the same of both sexes.

K.—Is circumcision known and practised?

L.—If practised, describe methods and ceremonies connected therewith.

M.—Details of inheritance, if any, from father, mother, uncle or aunt to children.

**NOTE.**—Obtain specimens of foods and appliances used for cooking. Also record methods of preparing food and of feeding, and obtain specimens of food bowls, flasks and gourds used in daily life.



## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 9

### **Childbirth—**

A.—Full details of accouchement customs.

B.—Ascertain if any customs or ceremonies connected with the disposal of the afterbirth, such as burial, are practised, and describe same.

C.—Are belts or any appliances of that description used before or after the birth.

D.—Ascertain if any artificial method of feeding infants is known and practised.

E.—Describe any methods employed of carrying infants.

F.—State if slings or other special carriers are used.

G.—Are children's toys known?

H.—Obtain any details about child life, such as games played, and quaint customs.

**NOTE.**—Obtain specimens of all objects associated with childbirth and maternity. Particulars of ceremonies connected with same, and appliances used by native midwives or medicine-men.

Obtain photographs, if possible, of any monstrosities or abnormal developments found, such as elephantiasis, etc.; also specimens of toys, if any.

## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 10

### **Burial customs—**

A.—Record details of methods of burial practised.

B.—Record any customs, superstitions and ceremonies connected with death and burial.

C.—What are the native ideas concerning death?

D.—Is embalming known or practised, or any other method of preserving the body after death? If so, record details.

E.—Is it a practise to put to death surplus infants, the aged, deformed and infirm?

## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 11

### **Astrology—**

- A.—What is the native idea of the origin of the sun, moon and planets?
- B.—Are they believed to have any influence on the mind and body of man?
- C.—Have the natives any idea of the Zodiac?
- D.—If so, is it believed to have any effect on the body of man or animal life in connection with health and disease?
- E.—Ascertain the native idea of the shape of the earth.
- F.—Whence come the sun, moon, planets and stars, and what are their courses, how controlled and from whence do they come and whither do they go?

## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 12

### **Adulteration and sophistication of medicines, foods and other things used by various tribes—**

Detail examples of cunning deceptions and falsifications  
of all kinds.



## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 13

### Ancient articles of artistic workmanship—

NOTE.—Obtain good specimens of ancient ivory, stone,  
metal, wood and other carvings and engravings.

Also paintings, if any, and objects illustrative of  
primitive art.

## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 14

### Weapons—

NOTE.—Obtain specimens of native-made weapons, armour, implements, instruments, etc., ancient and modern.

## NOTES

## SECTION NO. 15

### Primitive currency—

Obtain specimens of any special articles of barter, or used as currency.

## NOTES

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## SECTION NO. 16

### Weighing and measuring—

Obtain specimens and full particulars of all native appliances used for weighing, measuring distances, length, and size of objects and materials; also measures for liquids, solids, etc.

Specimens of mills, mortars, or querns for reducing substances to powder.

Furnaces and other heating methods; also anything that could be used as a furnace, or for the purpose of smelting, fusing, etc.

Native cooking stoves and other appliances, etc.

Retorts for distillation, if any, and all particulars of manufacture and use of spirituous liquors.



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